

Message Text

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DRAFTED BY LABOR:JTDUNLOP;OF

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TO USMISSION GENEVA

UNCLAS STATE 136870

E.O. 11652:NA

TAGS: ILO, AORG

SUBJECT:DRAFT SPEECH FROM SECRETARY OF LABOR

FOR EDWARD B. PERSONS - FROM SECRETARY OF LABOR

1. THERE FOLLOWS A DRAFT OF THE SPEECH I HAD PLANNED TO DELIVER TO THE ILO. PLEASE DELIVER COPIES TO DG BLANCHARD, LANE KIRKLAND, AND CHARLES SMITH.

"2.MR. PRESIDENT, MR. DIRECTOR-GENERAL, DISTINGUISHED VISITNG MINISTERS, DELEGATES, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN.

"3. I AM PARTICULARLY PLEASED TO BE SPEAKING TODAY UNDER THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE SECRETARY OF LABOR OF THE PHILIPPINES, MR. BLAS OPLE. I HAVE A PERSONAL ATTACHMENT TO THE PHILIPPINES BECAUSE IT WAS THERE--IN CEBU-- THAT I GREW UP AND GRADUATED FROM HIGH SCHOOL. I HAVE CONFIDENCE THAT THE DISTINGUISHED PRESIDENT OF THE CONFERENCE WILL LEAD THIS SESSION WITH SKILL AND FAIRNESS; HE HAS HAD A LONG ASSOCIATION WITH THE WORK AND TRADITIONS OF THE ILO. I CONGRATU-
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LATE THE ASIAN REGION FOR PLACING HIS NOMINATION BEFORE THIS CONFERENCE AND MY FRIEND BLAS OPLE FOR AGREEING TO UNDERTAKE THIS HEAVY RESPONSIBILITY.

"4. I WOULD LIKE ALSO TO EXPRESS MY HIGH REGARD FOR MY OLD FRIEND FRANCIS BLANCHARD AS THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF THIS ORGANIZATION. IT HAS BEEN MY PRIVILEGE TO KNOW HIM FROM THE DAYS HE WAS ASSISTANT DIRECTOR-GENERAL IN CHARGE OF DIRECTING THE RAPIDLY EXPANDING FIELD OPERATIONS IN THE OFFICE IN THE 1950'S.

"5. I DO NOT COME AS A STRANGER TO THE ILO AND ITS WORK. I HAVE KNOWN AND COUNSELED WITH EVERY DIRECTOR-GENERAL SINCE JOHN WINANT. IT WAS A PLEASURE TO BE A GUEST IN THE ECONOMICS DIVISION OF THE ILO HERE IN GENEVA IN 1957-58 AT THE INVITATION OF DIRECTOR-GENERAL DAVID MORSE, WRITING MY INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS SYSTEMS. I CAME TO KNOW WELL MANY MEMBERS OF THE STAFF AND GOVERNING BODY AND HAVE MAINTAINED THESE ASSOCIATIONS EVER SINCE. I AM ALSO HAPPY TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE ASSISTANCE OF THE INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF LABOR STUDIES TO THE INTERNATIONAL INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS ASSOCIATION. I AM PRESIDENT OF THAT SCHOLARLY ASSOCIATION WHICH IS HOLDING A WORLD CONGRESS IN GENEVA NEXT YEAR.

"6. IT IS PRECISELY BECAUSE I AM NOT A STRANGER AND APPRECIATE THE PROBLEMS OF DEVELOPMENT AND THE WORK OF THE ILO IN ITS HISTORIC PERSPECTIVE THAT I HAVE SUCH A DEEP CONCERN ABOUT WHAT LIES AHEAD FOR THIS ORGANIZATION. IT SEEMS TO ME UNFORTUNATE THAT IN RECENT YEARS THE POLITICAL FERMENT AMONG NATIONS HAS BEEN REFLECTED EXCESSIVELY IN OUR DEBATES. THE ILO DOES HAVE A LEGITIMATE INTEREST IN CERTAIN POLITICAL AREAS. WE SHOULD, FOR EXAMPLE, PURSUE VIGOROUSLY, AS IN THE PAST, THE IMPORTANT MATTERS OF FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION, FORCED LABOR, AND TRADE UNION RIGHTS. BUT POLITICS IS NOT THE MAIN BUSINESS OF THE ILO. WE SHOULD LEAVE POLITICAL MATTERS BASICALLY TO THE UN AND OTHER AGENCIES AND CONCENTRATE HERE ON QUESTIONS ON WHICH OUR DISTINCTIVE TRIPARTITE STRUCTURE GIVES US A COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGE. THE PREOCCUPATION WITH GRAND SCHEMES OF WORLD ECONOMIC ORDER, HOWEVER RELEVANT IN OTHER BODIES, SHOULD NOT BE ALLOWED TO DIVERT US FROM THE HARD DETAILS OF MEANS UNCLASSIFIED

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TO IMPROVE WAGES AND WORKING CONDITIONS. IT IS A BAD DEAL ANY TIME TO TRADE WORKERS' CONDITIONS AND THE RIGHTS OF EMPLOYERS AND WORKERS FOR GRAND POLITICAL VISIONS.

"7. I AM REMINDED OF THE WORDS OF ROBERT WATT, OUR FIRST WORKERS' DELEGATE TO THE ILO, WHO WAS A GOOD FRIEND OF MINE. TO THE CONFERENCE IN 1946 HE SAID:

PERHAPS WE CAN DO EVEN A BETTER JOB IF YOU AND I FULLY RECOGNIZE THAT THE INTERNATIONAL LABOR ORGANIZATION SHOULD MAKE ITS DECISIONS IN TERMS OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND NOT POLITICS. WHILE IT MAY NOT BE POSSIBLE COMPLETELY TO ESCAPE POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS, I SAY THAT THEY SHOULD BE

HELD TO A MINIMUM. WE ARE NOT HERE AS DIPLOMATS...IT WILL

HELP CONSIDERABLY IF WE STICK TO THE JOB WE ARE BEST QUALIFIED TO DO, AND DO NOT TRY TO TAKE OVER EITHER THE DIPLOMATIC OR POLITICAL JOB.'

"8. IT IS TIME--INDEED, IT IS OVERDUE--TO GET BACK TO FUNDAMENTALS. AT THE HISTORIC 1944 PHILADELPHIA SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE, ROBERT WATT USED THESE WORDS:

'WE OF THIS CONFERENCE ARE CHARGED WITH THIS RESPONSIBILITY OF REMOVING THE ECONOMIC OBSTACLES ON THE WAY TO PEACE. IT IS NOT OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO CHARGE AGAINST POLITICAL OBSTACLES. OUR ASSIGNMENT IS ECONOMIC. OUR EQUIPMENT MUST BE ECONOMIC. OUR EFFORTS MUST BE ECONOMIC. BUT IT IS ONLY BY ACCOMPLISHING OUR ECONOMIC OBJECTIVES THAT THE GOAL OF POLITICAL PEACE CAN BE GAINED AND THEN MAINTAINED.'

"9. BOBBY WATT SAW THINGS CLEARLY. THE EMPLOYER DELEGATES FROM THE UNITED STATES HAVE SEEN THEM THE SAME WAY. THE WORK OF THE ILO IS BASICALLY ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL IN NATURE. ITS MAIN FUNCTION IS TO PROMOTE THE WELL-BEING OF WORKERS EVERYWHERE. AND TO SERVE THAT FUNCTION, THE TRIPARTITE STRUCTURE OF THE ILO IS ADMIRABLY SUITED. IT IS THE ONE ORGANIZATION THAT DARES TO REACH DOWN TO THE PEOPLE IT SERVES. WHAT BETTER WAY IS THERE THAN FOR WORKERS, EMPLOYERS, AND GOVERNMENTS TO SIT DOWN TOGETHER AND TALK UNCLASSIFIED

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OVER PRACTICAL PROBLEMS, ONE AT A TIME, INDUSTRY BY INDUSTRY COUNTRY BY COUNTRY, AND REGION BY REGION, SEEKING PRACTICAL MEASURES. THIS APPROACH RECOGNIZES THAT NO TWO OF OUR ECONOMIES AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS ARRANGEMENTS ARE IDENTICAL, AND PRACTICAL MEASURES NEED TO BE ADAPTED TO EACH.

"10. NOW, HOW DO WE GO ABOUT OUR HISTORICAL MISSION AND OUR MAIN BUSINESS? THE REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL PROVIDES US WITH GUIDELINES. I AGREE THOROUGHLY WITH HIS ASSERTION IN THE INTRODUCTION THAT, EVEN IN A PERIOD OF HEAVY UNEMPLOYMENT, WE MUST NOT LIMIT OUR EFFORTS TO THE CREATION OF MORE JOBS, ESSENTIAL AS IS THAT OBJECTIVE. WE MUST AT THE SAME TIME WORK TOWARD THE CREATION OF BETTER JOBS. IN THE UNITED STATES WE TOO ARE CONCERNED NOT JUST WITH THE TOTAL NUMBER OF JOBS, BUT ALSO WITH THEIR QUALITY AND CHARACTER. THERE IS WIDESPREAD CONCERN THAT WE HAVE TOO MANY LOW-LEVEL JOBS AND NOT ENOUGH "GOOD" JOBS. GOOD JOBS ARE THOSE CHARACTERIZED BY GOOD PAY AND BENEFITS, CHALLENGING AND REWARDING JOB CONTENT, OPPORTUNITIES FOR ADVANCEMENT, AND SAFE WORKING CONDITIONS. GOOD JOBS EVERYWHERE, IT MAY BE OBSERVED, REQUIRE SUBSTANTIAL

CAPITAL, PRIVATE OR SOCIAL. TO US THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL'S

APPROACH IS, AS WE SAY, "RIGHT ON."

"11. HE HAS GIVEN US A REPORT THIS YEAR WHICH IS CONCERNED WITH REAL PROBLEMS, IS AMBITIOUS IN ITS GOALS, AND IS WRITTEN WITH THE CLARITY AND INTELLIGENCE WE HAVE COME TO EXPECT FROM HIM. HE ADDRESSES THE PROBLEMS INVOLVED IN THE PERFORMANCE OF WORK AND SETS FORTH TWO METHODS OF ATTACKING THEM. THE FIRST IS TO ESTABLISH GOALS AND OBJECTIVES RELATED TO REAL WORK PROBLEMS, SUCH AS REDUCTION OF ACCIDENTS IN SPECIFIC INDUSTRIES, AND THEN TO MEASURE AND MONITOR PROGRESS TOWARD THEM. THE SECOND IS TO ESTABLISH THE COMPREHENSIVE INTERNATIONAL PROGRAM FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF WORKING CONDITIONS AND ENVIRONMENT.

"12. THE UNITED STATES WARMLY ENDORSES THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL AND LOOKS FORWARD TO WORKING WITH HIM IN THEIR DEVELOPMENT. WE URGE THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL TO UNCLASSIFIED

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APPLY THE GOALS AND MEASURES OF PROGRESS TO THE INTERNATIONAL PROGRAM. IN THAT WAY, WE CAN BE ASSURED THAT THE ILO'S EFFORT IS NOT MISDIRECTED OR WASTED.

"13. THE SUBJECTS DISCUSSED BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL ARE OF INTEREST TO THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES, AND ESPECIALLY TO THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR. I EXPECT MY GOVERNMENT TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE PROGRAM'S DEVELOPMENT AND HOPE THAT OTHERS WILL DO THE SAME. THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL HAS BEEN BOLD ENOUGH TO SHARE WITH US HIS TENTATIVE THINKING ON HOW THE PROGRAM SHOULD DEVELOP. WE SHOULD RETURN THE COMPLIMENT BY SHARING WITH HIM OUR OWN THOUGHTS ON THAT SUBJECT. IN THAT CONNECTION, I COMMEND CHAPTER 5 TO ALL THE DELEGATES.

"14. THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL STRONGLY EMPHASIZES THAT THE ILO MUST KEEP IN MIND FROM THE BEGINNING OF THIS PROGRAM THAT THE PROBLEM OF IMPROVING WORKING CONDITIONS AND ENVIRONMENT WILL VARY CONSIDERABLY BY COUNTRY, ACTIVITY, AND OCCUPATION AND THAT THERE ARE FEW ABSTRACTIONS OF GENERAL APPLICATION. HE RECOMMENDS A FOCUS ON PARTICULAR INDUSTRIES AND A GREATER ROLE FOR INDUSTRIAL COMMITTEES. AS A MEDIATOR AND ARBITRATOR I KNOW THE ABIDING STRENGTHS OF WORKING OUT MUTUALLY ACCOMMODATED SOLUTIONS. I STRONGLY SUPPORT THESE VIEWS.

"15. I ALSO COMMEND THE EMPHASIS GIVEN BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL TO EVOLVING NEW METHODS OF TECHNICAL COOPERATION ADAPTED TO THE NEEDS OF THE RURAL SECTOR. FOR MANY COUNTRIES OF THE WORLD RURAL DEVELOPMENT IS, AND WILL REMAIN FOR MANY YEARS TO COME, COMPARATIVELY MORE IMPORTANT

THAN FULL INDUSTRIALIZATION. EMPLOYMENT REMAINS THE MAJOR

PROBLEM ON WHICH WE ALL NEED TO CONCENTRATE FOR THE FORE-
SEEABLE FUTURE. THE ILO IN ITS WORLD EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM
WAS ONE OF THE FIRST TO RECOGNIZE THIS FACT. IT IS
REFLECTED IN ITS COUNTRY REPORTS, THE VERY GOOD ONE ON
THE PHILIPPINES, MR. PRESIDENT, AND ON COLOMBIA, AMONG
OTHERS.

"16. AS I REFLECT ON THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL'S REPORT, I AM
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IMPRESSED BY THE DIVERSITY OF METHODS WHICH THE ILO CAN
BRING TO BEAR ON THE NEW PROGRAM: THESE INCLUDE STUDIES
AND RESEARCH, TECHNICAL COOPERATION, BETTER USE OF TRI-
PARTITE INDUSTRIAL COMMITTEES, BETTER LINKAGE BETWEEN
METHODS, AND STANDARDS-SETTING. I DO BELIEVE, HOWEVER,
THAT IT IS IMPERATIVE TO IMPROVE APPRECIABLY THE PRO-
FESSIONAL QUALITY OF OUR WORK SO THAT IT WILL COMMAND
GREATER INTEREST AND EARN GREATER RESPECT.

"17. I WOULD ALSO SUGGEST THAT WE CONSIDER THE DEGREE TO
WHICH THE ILO MIGHT FURTHER DEVELOP ITS INFORMATION
CLEARINGHOUSE FUNCTION TO SERVE ITS MEMBERS IN THIS NEW
PROGRAM. YOUR NEW SOCIAL AND LABOUR BULLETIN IS A STEP IN
THAT DIRECTION. GIVEN ITS MANDATE AND ITS MEMBERSHIP, THE
ILO IS UNIQUELY QUALIFIED TO POOL INFORMATION AND CONVEY
IT TO COUNTRIES THAT CAN BENEFIT FROM COMPARATIVE INTER-
NATIONAL EXPERIENCE BY GETTING NEW IDEAS OR AVOIDING
DUPLICATION OF WORK.

"18. I COMMEND THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL'S FORMULATION OF THE
NEW INTERNATIONAL PROGRAM AS ONE FOR ALL STATES. I
APPLAUD ESPECIALLY HIS RECOGNITION THAT AS STATES WITH
RELATIVELY SMALL INDUSTRIAL BASES DEVELOP, THEY MAY
REASONABLY BE EXPECTED TO FACE A NUMBER OF PROBLEMS
SIMILAR TO THOSE OF MORE INDUSTRIALIZED STATES. THE
WORKPLACES AND URBAN AREAS TEND TO DEVELOP MORE SIMILAR
CHARACTERISTICS OVER AN EXTENDED PERIOD OF TIME. IN
ACADEMIC TERMS, AS INDUSTRIALIZATION TAKES PLACE, INDUS-
TRIAL RELATIONS SYSTEMS DEVELOP AND TAKE ON SOME COMMON
CHARACTERISTICS; A DEGREE OF CONVERGENCE EMERGES. THE
IMPLICATION FOR ILO WORK IS CLEAR. AS OUR INDUSTRIAL
RELATIONS SYSTEMS ARE LESS DIVERGENT, THE PROBLEMS WHICH
WE FACE WILL BECOME MORE COMMON AND THE DIFFERENCES AT
THE WORKPLACE AND THE INDUSTRY LEVEL LESS PRONOUNCED. IT
IS CLEAR THAT WE WILL DO BETTER BY CONCENTRATING MORE ON
OUR INCREASINGLY COMMON PROBLEMS AND LESS ON OUR STRICTLY
POLITICAL DIFFERENCES.

"19. IN CLOSING, I RETURN TO THE FUNDAMENTALS; I QUOTE
FROM THE PREAMBLE OF THE ILO CONSTITUTION ADOPTED IN 1919:

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'AND WHEREAS CONDITIONS OF LABOR EXIST INVOLVING SUCH INJUSTICE, HARDSHIP AND PRIVATION TO LARGE NUMBERS OF PEOPLE AS TO PRODUCE UNREST SO GREAT THAT THE PEACE AND HARMONY OF THE WORLD ARE IMPERILLED; AND AN IMPROVEMENT OF THOSE CONDITIONS IS URGENTLY REQUIRED: AS, FOR EXAMPLE, BY THE REGULATION OF THE HOURS OF WORK, INCLUDING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A MAXIMUM WORKING DAY AND WEEK, THE REGULATION OF THE LABOR SUPPLY, THE PREVENTION OF UNEMPLOYMENT, THE PROVISIONS OF AN ADEQUATE LIVING WAGE, THE PROTECTION OF THE WORKER AGAINST SICKNESS, DISEASE AND INJURY ARISING OUT OF HIS EMPLOYMENT, THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN, YOUNG PERSONS AND WOMEN, PROVISION FOR OLD AGE AND INJURY, PROTECTION OF THE INTERESTS OF WORKERS WHEN EMPLOYED IN COUNTRIES OTHER THAN THEIR OWN, RECOGNITION OF THE PRINCIPLE OF EQUAL REMUNERATION FOR WORK OF EQUAL VALUE RECOGNITION OF THE PRINCIPLE OF FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION, THE ORGANIZATION OF VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION AND OTHER MEASURES.'

"20. FROM TIME TO TIME, THE DEPTH OF THE COMMITMENT OF THE UNITED STATES TO THE ILO HAS BEEN QUESTIONED. THERE HAS INDEED BEEN SOME DOUBT IN OUR COUNTRY AS TO WHETHER THE ILO WAS NOT DRIFTING TOO FAR FROM ITS HISTORIC AND PROPER ROLE AS SPELLED OUT IN 1919 AND 1944; AND, FRANKLY, THERE ARE SOME WHO WONDER WHETHER IT IS STILL IN OUR INTEREST TO BE INVOLVED IN THIS ORGANIZATION.

"21. LET ME ASSURE YOU THAT, IF THE ILO RETURNS TO THESE PRINCIPLES AND TO THAT APPROACH, I SHALL CALL UPON THE REPRESENTATIVES OF EMPLOYERS AND WORKERS, TOGETHER WITH GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES IN THE UNITED STATES, TO ENCOURAGE RENEWED SUPPORT FOR THE ILO ON A TRIPARTITE BASIS. UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES I AM CONFIDENT THAT THE AMERICAN WORKERS AND EMPLOYERS WILL RESPOND WITH NEW ENTHUSIASM.

"22. THE 1919 STATEMENT WHICH I HAVE JUST READ IS NOT SIMPLY AN HISTORIC DOCUMENT. IT IS, IN FACT, A MODERN AGENDA FOR ALL COUNTRIES. LET US RESOLVE TO GET ON WITH IT." KISSINGER

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